

MEMORIES

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in the United States.

"I never knew anything about the internment until I went to college," Lee said. "Friends told me about it and I just couldn't believe it."

He now administers the redress program, which repays Japanese Americans for past injustices. The program is coming to a close, he said, because its objectives are almost met.

Systematic removal

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, public hysteria

and distrust focused on Japanese Americans.

Attorney General Francis Biddle wrote to Roosevelt in 1942: "For several weeks there have been increasing demands for evacuation of all Japanese, aliens and citizens alike, from the West Coast states. A great many West Coast people distrust the Japanese, various special interests would welcome their removal from good farm land the elimination of their competition."

When the Japanese were imprisoned by Roosevelt's order, the government confiscated many Japanese people's land. Their houses, which the

government ordered locked and assured them would be there when the war was over, were often looted and burned, according to Ken Verdoia's KUED documentary, "Topaz."

During the entire war, only 10 people — all white — were convicted of spying for Japan.

A poster displayed in Delta's Great Basin Museum announced the evacuation of all Los Angeles people of Japanese descent. "Japanese" included even those with one-sixteenth Japanese blood, said Jane Beckwith, museum president. They were allowed to take only the things they could carry.

Family history

Jeff Itami, a criminologist with the Salt Lake County Sheriff's Office, was interned in similar camps in Idaho and Wyoming from 1942 to 1945. He said both grandfathers and his younger brother died in internment camps.

"A lot of the grandparents had not survived the camps because they had lost everything," Itami said. "It broke their hearts. Whether you put them in an oven or you break their hearts and kill them, they die. That's not right."

Stuart Ishimaru, counsel to the assistant attorney general in the Civil Rights Division of

the Justice Department, saw for the first time the Topaz of his family stories. His parents spent three years there. His father, Kenzo Ishimaru, attended high school at Topaz and still goes to class reunions.

"It was the same as regular high schools. It was the same thing, which always struck me as amazing," Ishimaru said. "You made a go of it just like anywhere in the country."

A weird experience

Ishimaru recalled public reaction to the passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which gave the Japanese a public apology and money for con-

fiscated property.

"There are these deep-held feelings that we really didn't see as a community until the '80s when the issue came to the fore, and you saw this tremendous outpouring of held-back feelings from over the years," Ishimaru said. "This is really a treat to come here, because I grew up knowing this, I knew that my parents were in camp here."

"It's weird for me now, working at the Justice Department, the same place where these decisions were made 50-some-odd years ago, and now being a senior official. It's very ironic," Ishimaru said.

Woman accused of killing boyfriend allegedly tried to flush remains

By JAMES BURKE
Associated Press Writer

VANCOUVER, Wash. — When Scott Lee Weisenborn got cold feet about a third marriage, he disappeared.

His one-time girlfriend was charged with first-degree murder after human tissue and internal organs were found in the septic tank at his home near Battle Ground, about 18 miles north-east of this Columbia River city.

Amy Joyce Weir, 34, is being

held on \$750,000 bond pending trial June 8.

She has pleaded innocent and her attorney, James Dunn, says he plans to use an accidental-death defense.

In a Thursday interview with The Associated Press, Dunn conceded Weir disposed of Weisenborn's body.

"She's charged with premeditated murder, not with what happened after that — which is very unfortunate," Dunn said.

"The fact of how he died is

what is accidental. No one's going to be saying that she accidentally cut him up."

He declined comment when asked how Weisenborn died and would not discuss what happened to the body.

The remains in the septic tank were found in mid-December — about six weeks after Weisenborn vanished. Last weekend, human skeletal remains were found in a flowerbed at a vacant home once owned by Weir's grandmother. It

now belongs to an uncle.

"It's clear enough that we can acknowledge that she disposed of the body and buried it at grandma's house," Dunn said Thursday.

All the remains are being tested for positive links to Weisenborn. DNA tests on the organs and tissue could take months. Dental records could help with the skeletal remains, Clark County Deputy Medical Examiner Don Phillips said.

The couple started dating

last June.

By summer's end, they were living together at Weisenborn's house. Both had been around the block a few times.

Weisenborn, 34, had been married and divorced twice, staying close to his second wife — Brittany Weisenborn, who reported him missing — and their two children.

Weir, divorced once, has four children from her marriage and another relationship.

It didn't take long for the Weir-

Weisenborn romance to sour.

Weir told detectives she and Weisenborn had agreed to marry on Nov. 15, but that he changed his mind in October. She didn't want to live together unmarried, she says, and made plans to move out by the end of the month.

Authorities believe Weisenborn was killed Oct. 31 or Nov. 1. Clark County sheriff's detectives have pieced together his final days based on interviews with his co-workers, friends and second wife.